



The Round Table

Published by Church of the Reconciler, a Multicultural, Interracial United Methodist Congregation
P.O. Box 10931 • Birmingham, AL 35202 • (205) 324-6402 or (205) 491-3430
R. Lawton Higgs, Sr., Pastor • Prince Yelder, Worship Leader

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God is Good!

God is good, all the time! We often celebrate the presence of God in our midst at Reconciler with that responsive affirmation. We face many challenges as a multicultural/interracial congregation in ministry with the diverse community of people in downtown Birmingham. We struggle with all the "isms" that should be "wasms": racism, classism, sexism and on and on. We face all the fears the "isms" generate as well as those related to poverty, crime, homelessness and addiction.

We don't say this to complain, but to boast in the grace of God. We are grateful for the work of ministry God has given us! We say this to invite you to join us in the work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We believe that God wants us to be witnesses for Jesus in the midst of the need, not to be running from the needs of the world. We celebrate the call to overcome evil with good. God is faithful.

Won't you join us in the work? Come to a church where you can be uncomfortable! We do not trust in ourselves, but depend only on the grace of God, and we enjoy God with a truly diverse group of people.

Gifts and the labors of many people have brought Church of the Reconciler to this place and this day. We give thanks to God for each one. The fruit of these gifts and labors is manifest. We have received 9 new members already in 1998. We have an exciting membership class for our youth in progress. We serve a common meal for 100 to 150 people and distribute clothing to 30 persons each Sunday. We have 15 - 25 in our two adult study classes each Sunday. We have 15 - 30 children in our three children's classes each Sunday. We have 75-100 people in worship. Won't you join us in the uncomfortable challenging work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ at 316 N 18th Street, downtown Birmingham? Won't you strengthen the witness of God's love for all the world? Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again!

R. Lawton Higgs, Sr.

Youth Report

The Reconciler youth ministry continues to expand! Easter 1997 marked a record children/youth attendance of 23. Now we frequently exceed this number on any given Sunday. As Easter approaches, we are optimistic that we'll establish a new record.

Are we experiencing growing pains? Indeed, we are experiencing growing pleasures, as young people demonstrate commitment, leadership, and a sense of ownership and pride in their church home. The teenagers are participating in an membership class during the School for Urban Christian Living on Sundays.

Our Community Adventures continue. A Community Adventure is an outing composed of spiritual challenge and a chance to improve mental or physical skills. So far this year we celebrated Dr. King's birthday at the Civil Rights Institute, attended a Tom Chapin concert at the Alys Stephens Center, enjoyed a Sunday mission program with supper at Trinity UMC, and a Birmingham Southern Youth Fellowship, complete with tours and workshops. We thank First UMC, Trinity UMC and Birmingham Southern for their assistance.

Clay Simmons and the youth of Trinity UMC have faithfully provided and served breakfast snacks once each month. This makes the children feel special, while preparing them to focus on the service. I understand that it also benefits those who sacrifice time, effort and food to serve others and uplift us in our endeavors. Those cups of cold juice and pieces of hot bread served in His name do not go unnoticed or unrewarded.

Our young people look forward to a continuation of activities with other church groups. We're all learning that we're more alike than different, and that similar experiences result in similar happiness or discomfort. Strangers in in God's kingdom are merely friends we haven't met yet, and our youth have lots to offer in His service.

Jo Dobbins, Youth Coordinator

Worship Celebration, Sundays, 9:30 a.m. • Location: 4th Avenue N and 18th Street Downtown

Holy Week Calendar

The season of Lent is a season of prayer, self-examination, and repentance. We have planned the following services to observe this special season:

Palm Sunday, April 5. We will have a parade to Kelly Ingram Park following the worship service.

Maundy Thursday, April 9. We will celebrate communion at 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 10. Lawton will speak in a Good Friday service at 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul UMC, 1500

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We want to clean up and decorate our baby nursery to make it more appropriate for babies and small

details, call 491-3430.

available until our second Easter service at 9:30 am. For time details, call 491-3430.

6th Avenue N. You are invited to

This year we will once again honor the special women in our lives with an insert in the Mother's Day bulletin. Names can be listed for \$2. Donations from that listing and other donations will be used to redecorate the nursery.

- Bibles for the homeless.

We continue our Wednesday night gatherings at 6:30 to build community and work on the issues that affect our ministry. We will soon begin a discussion on faith sharing. How do we share our faith

Church of the Reconciler is establishing a Christian Legal Society program under the direction of member Wilson Myers. We need volunteers to help in all aspects of this initiative. If you have any legal experience, as a lawyer, paralegal, secretary, or in any other capacity, please call Wilson at 322-8684 (work) or 794-7426 (home).